

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000124

SIPDIS

STATE PASS DOE FOR DAS JBRODMAN AND CGAY
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS AND SRENENDER
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ
STATE FOR DS/IP/AF, AF/EX, DS/IP/OPO, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/ITA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/27/2016

TAGS: [EPET](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [KHLs](#) [PINR](#) [ETRD](#) [CASC](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: OIL WORKER HOSTAGE UPDATE SITREP #19

REF: A. LAGOS 123 AND PREVIOUS

[1](#)B. LAGOS 99

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for Reasons 1.4 (D & E)

HOSTAGE WELFARE UPDATE
LAST NIGHT'S ABORTED RELEASE

[1](#)1. (C) We have received several explanations for the breakdown of last night's hostage release. In addition to the presence of military patrol boats that allegedly frightened the kidnappers from leaving their hide-out (reftel A), Bayelsa Secretary of the State Government (SSG) Dr. Igali said a disagreement, now resolved, between the five Ijaw negotiators assigned to his committee over a planned press statement delayed the release. Dr. Igali also told a Tidex representative the kidnappers were upset about being misquoted in recent Reuters reports. According to Shell, the Bayelsa State Governor said the release was not effectuated because too many people were made aware of the rendezvous and this warned off the kidnappers. To avoid a repeat of last night, Igali apparently has discussed reducing the number of GON boats on patrol in the area tonight with the President's Chief of Staff and the National Security Advisor.

[1](#)2. (C) Igali said the release is scheduled between eight and ten p.m. tonight.

MILITARY UPDATE

[1](#)3. (C) Yesterday the UK DATT met the GON Chief of Defense Staff (CDS). According to a British official, the CDS stated no military action would occur "until after the hostages are released." (Comment: We don't know if the CDS really intended to imply there would be military reprisal once the hostages were freed. We have been hearing part of the deal leading to the release was a GON promise of military forbearance. Should the promise be made and then broken, any relief occasioned by the hostage release would be very short-lived. End comment.) The Chief also confirmed the Bayelsa State government is in contact with the kidnappers through intermediaries. The Chief opined that the kidnappers realize the situation has grown larger than their ability to control it and that they want a way out and want to release the hostages.

[1](#)4. (C) DATT reports that numerous troops were being deployed from Warri, Delta State, to Yenagoa, but said the movement was part of the normal troop rotation and the GON military is cognizant of the need to avoid any confrontation that would escalate tensions.

PRESS UPDATE

[1](#)5. (C) UK representatives said stories on the hostages and Niger Delta security will be published in some UK papers tomorrow, possibly including the Sunday Times and the Observer.

FAMILY LETTERS UPDATE

[1](#)6. (C) At the advice of their security consultants the oil service companies have asked the families to write letters to the hostages to boost their morale and to appeal to their captors. No letter has been provided by the families of Patrick Landry or Nigel Watson Clark. FBI negotiators think the letter is a good idea and will broach the subject with Landry's wife and son. FBI negotiators and their Scotland Yard counterparts also believe that media intervention by family members may be useful if this situation continues. We

have relayed the Department's concerns about media intervention to the FBI. FBI headquarters will be in touch with the Department should they feel the need to pursue the idea further. Additionally, FBI will work with the Landry family to obtain medical records in light of the recently received information that Mr. Landry suffered a mild stroke several years ago.

NEW ATTACK IN THE DELTA

17. (C) Shell reported an attack on a Daewoo facility in Rivers State between eight and nine a.m. this morning. They described the attack as an armed robbery, with approximately thirty armed men in several speedboats attacking a bank located on the compound. The robbers apparently took an undetermined sum of payroll money. There were no fatalities. Security forces reportedly fled when the attack began. (Note: Today was payday for Daewoo employees at the facility. The robbers knew exactly when to hit. This modus operandi reflects that in recent robberies described in reftel B. End note.)
BROWNE